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Sustainable development

Oil slick on Lebanese shores

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The present report, submitted in response to the request contained in General Assembly resolution 63/211, provides an update on the progress of the implementation of Assembly resolutions 61/194, 62/188 and 63/211 related to the oil slick on Lebanese shores that resulted from the bombing of el Jiyeh power plant, a civilian utility serving the general public. It complements the information presented in previous reports of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/62/343 and A/63/225).

* A/64/150.
** The submission of the report was delayed four days to allow for further internal consultations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report, prepared by a United Nations inter-agency team, has been submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/211, by which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the resolution under the item entitled "Sustainable development".

2. The report provides updates to the information presented in the previous reports of the Secretary-General (A/62/343 and A/63/225), which constitute an integral part of the present report, which covers:

(a) Overall assessment of implications of the oil spill for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health in the country (chapter II);

(b) Progress made in approaching the Government of Israel on the assumption of responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon (chapter III);

(c) Overview of the progress made in cleaning up and rehabilitation operations with a view to preserving the ecosystem of Lebanon and that of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin (chapter IV);

(d) Progress made in the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund and mobilization of sufficient and adequate resources (chapter V).

II. Implications of the oil spill for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health in the country

3. The marine oil spill resulted in the release of about 15,000 tons of fuel oil into the Mediterranean Sea, leading to the contamination of about 150 km of coastline in Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 63/211, the General Assembly reiterates the expression of its deep concern about the adverse implications of the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of the oil storage tanks in the direct vicinity of the Lebanese el Jiyeh electric power plant for the achievement of sustainable development in Lebanon, and in paragraph 3, it considers that the oil slick has heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and partially polluted Syrian shores and consequently has had serious implications for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health, in the country.

4. Several United Nations and other international entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, were involved in assessing the implications of the oil spill for human health, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism in Lebanon. The reports of those entities, together with those of the Government of Lebanon and UNEP/Mediterranean Action

Plan/Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea, provided a prompt and reasonably comprehensive account of the immediate impact and response. A summary of the combined findings was presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session (see A/62/343) and its sixty-third session (see A/63/225), under the triple headings of:

(a) Social (public health and safety);

(b) Economic (clean-up and monitoring, lost economic opportunities);

(c) Environmental (ecological and physico-chemical impacts).

5. There have been no further studies during the past year, except for the following two studies:

(a) With financing from the Government of Spain, through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development, in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision, a general bio-monitoring survey was conducted in Palm Island Nature Reserve and preliminary results documented some impact of oil spill on sea birds. The survey stated that mortality was not significant; however, some sea birds were found contaminated by oil. The Government-appointed Committee of the Palm Island Nature Reserve reported that gulls and cormorants were cleaned and released.

(b) With financing from the Canadian International Development Agency through UNDP, in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision, a survey conducted by a Greek environmental engineering consultancy firm thoroughly covered an area encompassing a shoreline length of approximately 210 km (from Tyre to the northern border of Lebanon) over a period of two months starting from November 2008. Preliminary results indicated that:

(i) Twelve sites still needed to be cleaned; most of those sites were not readily accessible by land;

(ii) Many sites were still stained by the oil spill but should be left for weathering and natural effects rather than active intervention for clean-up by humans;

(iii) Ten sites (from Tyre to the northern border of Lebanon) were selected for the underwater field survey according to criteria set by the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and the Greek consultancy firm. None of the underwater surveys conducted in the 10 sites revealed any underwater contamination with heavy fuel oil with the exception of Jbeil-Byblos beach, where a large number of tarballs were found, but no compact layer of fuel was discovered by digging into the sandy bottom of the area.

III. Progress made in approaching the Government of Israel on the assumption of responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon

6. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 63/211, the General Assembly requests the Government of Israel to assume responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon and other countries directly affected

by the oil slick, such as the Syrian Arab Republic whose shores have been partially polluted, for the costs of repairing the environmental damage caused by the destruction, including the restoration of the marine environment. This echoed the previous request made in paragraph 3 of Assembly resolution 61/194 and paragraph 4 of resolution 62/188.

7. To date, the Government of Israel has yet to assume its responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon. The reaction of the Government of Israel to Assembly resolution 61/194 was formally sought by a letter from the UNEP Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch to the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva, dated 16 August 2007, to which no response was received. A further letter, dated 5 June 2008, was sent from the Executive Director of UNEP to the Permanent Representative of Israel to UNEP, highlighting the renewed request for action on the part of Israel contained within Assembly resolution 62/188. The response received from the Government of Israel on 10 September 2008 (see annex 1) did not commit to any action towards putting into effect paragraph 3 of resolution 61/194 and paragraph 4 of resolution 62/188; and no response has been received from the Government of Israel in the light of the request in Assembly resolution 63/211, paragraph 4.

8. In 2007, UNDP reviewed the many conventions that relate to oil pollution at sea, which many eastern Mediterranean countries have signed, as well as other possible agreements or compensation schemes. Unfortunately, all conventions are inapplicable during armed hostilities. Additionally, the agreements that relate to spill compensation[1] pertain only to oil spills from tanker vessels at sea, and not land-based incidents. In 2007, UNDP recommended examination of the United Nations Compensation Commission as the only precedent-setting major oil-spill compensation regime for spills arising from armed hostilities.[2]

9. All littoral States of the eastern Mediterranean are signatory to the only oil spill response convention that relates to cooperation in response to spills arising from coastal oil-handling facilities and not merely from tankers, the International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation, 1990, which entered into force in 1995 and which is aimed at facilitating international cooperation and mutual assistance between States and regions. The spirit of the Convention clearly could not be fully observed during the hostilities of July 2006 and in the aftermath of the marine oil spill.

10. Although not specifically concerned with spill compensation issues or non-accidental acts during war hostilities, that Convention could nevertheless be utilized for future capacity-building and regional cooperation in the area of spill

[1] The International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage, 1969, and the 1992 Protocol thereto; the 1992 Protocol to the International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage (International Oil Pollution Compensation Fund); and the 2003 Protocol on the Establishment of a Supplementary Fund for Oil Pollution Damage (Supplementary Fund Protocol).

[2] By its resolution 687 (1991), the Security Council created an indemnification fund for damages and harm caused following the invasion of Kuwait. As a result, millions of dollars were disbursed as compensation for lost revenues during the recession in Kuwait. For the first time, paying indemnities for damaging the environment and destroying natural resources was expressly allowed.

planning. Israel, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic should be strongly encouraged to take a leadership role in a thorough post-spill review of convention-related activities in the eastern Mediterranean Sea, hosted by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea. Other regional signatories of the Convention that could have been affected by the spill, including via aerial transfer combustion products, are Egypt, Greece, Jordan and Turkey.

11. The Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean also sets out, in article 9, the following obligations of the parties to cooperate in dealing with pollution emergencies:

> The Contracting Parties shall cooperate in taking the necessary measures for dealing with pollution emergencies in the Mediterranean Sea area, whatever the causes of such emergencies, and reducing or eliminating damage resulting therefrom;
>
> Any Contracting Party which becomes aware of any pollution emergency in the Mediterranean Sea area shall without delay notify the Organization and, either through the Organization or directly, any Contracting Party likely to be affected by such emergency.

12. The Government of Lebanon notified the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea of the oil spill by a letter dated 21 July 2006.

13. As cited in the report of the Secretary-General (A/62/343), a range of recovery measures to respond to the Lebanon oil spill have been suggested as a positive step towards biodiversity conservation and restoration of livelihood in the region.

IV. Progress made in the provision of financial and technical assistance in support of the efforts of the Government of Lebanon to complete the clean-up and rehabilitation operations, with the aim of preserving the ecosystem of Lebanon and that of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin

14. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 63/211, the General Assembly encourages Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to continue their financial and technical support to the Government of Lebanon towards achieving the completion of clean-up and rehabilitation operations, with the aim of preserving the ecosystem of Lebanon and that of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin.

15. When the oil spill occurred in July 2006, it overwhelmed national response capacity because of the ongoing conflict, the simultaneous need for a massive humanitarian response, the destruction of infrastructure and a land, air and sea blockade by Israel. Those factors also impeded initial efforts for international assistance. During the conflict, the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon mobilized resources with its partners in the international community. It also coordinated preventive interventions, such as the construction of barriers to protect industry and the coastline from further spillage. After the end of the conflict, some international assistance was provided and clean-up operations started.

A. Clean up

16. The Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon implemented a two-phase clean-up plan as and when materials and resources were provided by the various bilateral partners and international organizations, as described in its commemorative reports of July 2007 and September 2008.[3]

17. During the first phase, the priorities set by the Ministry of the Environment were to recover free-floating oil from the sea and confined areas; clean areas with potential for direct human contact or risk to public health; rehabilitate areas where oil slicks hampered economic activities; and address direct threats to environmentally or culturally important sites. This not only followed the three-part approach to sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) but was also consistent with best practices in protection and clean-up prioritization. Phase I was completed in February 2007, in partnership with various Member States and organizations, including the Government of Italy, the Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), UNDP, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the Canadian International Development Agency, the United States Agency for International Development, as well as local non-governmental organizations.

18. Following the completion of phase I, between April and May 2007 the Ministry of the Environment conducted a survey of the Lebanese coast to determine the scope of work for phase II, which focused primarily on the removal of fuel from rocks, wave cut platforms, cliffs and infrastructure. An underwater survey of the near-shore and littoral zones of the coast between the northern zone (Abdeh-Akkar) and the southern zone (Jadra) was carried out by the Ministry and financed by UNDP.

19. Clean-up work followed, sponsored by the Government of Japan through UNDP,[4] the Government of Norway through the Higher Relief Commission in

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[3] The Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon commemorated the second anniversary of the oil spill disaster in order to strengthen environmental awareness of its severe impacts and to foster partnerships between institutions from different sectors as well as showcase the latest developments. This second international commemorative event, held at the Lebanese University under the theme "Two years on — Oil Spill Crisis in Lebanon, July 2006-2008: So that we shall not forget" was attended by approximately 150 participants. It targeted national media organizations, oil spill partners (public entities, private national and international companies, national organizations and non-governmental organizations, international organizations (the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)), other development partners (embassies, the Centre de Documentation de Recherche et d'Experimentations sur les pollutions accidentelles des eaux and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development), the general public, the local community, academics (faculty and students), and others. It included the production and dissemination of the second memorial booklet that listed events with regard to the oil spill over the past two years, in addition to the launching of the website http://www.moe.gov.lb/OilSpill2006 and the presentation of experience gained by partners of the Ministry, as well as an exhibition in which all partners involved had the chance to present their work.

[4] Clean-up operations in areas surrounding Dalieh fishermen's wharf in Beirut and el Jiyeh — four lots (September-November 2007), under the technical supervision of the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon.

Lebanon,[5] USAID[6] and the Government of Spain through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development,[7] as part of phase II activities which should be completed by summer 2009.

20. A comprehensive oil spill shoreline survey from Tyre to the northern border of Lebanon was undertaken between November and December 2008, with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency through UNDP in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision. The findings are anticipated to be published by September 2009. Minor and pre-final clean-up activities at about 12 sites, with a total length of approximately 7.3 km, will be initiated by the Ministry of the Environment. The 12 sites are as follows:

(a) One rocky site in south Beirut (500 m);

(b) Six rocky sites in north Beirut (2,850 m);

(c) Five sites around Beirut (3,950 m), which included:

(i) Three riprap sites;

(ii) One few rock and riprap site;

(iii) One concrete wall site.

B. Waste management

21. As of June 2008, approximately 500 cubic metres of liquid and 3,120 cubic metres of semi-solid and solid waste had been collected during both phases of clean-up operations and all had been appropriately stored in containers in secure temporary storage sites, with contribution from all partners, particularly the Government of Japan and the Canadian International Development Agency both through UNDP in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision.

22. Upon the request of the Government of Lebanon, two studies were undertaken on the treatment and disposal options in respect of oil-spill waste. The first, entitled "Assessment and review of oil spill clean-up waste and review of possible treatment options", was funded by UNDP and published in July 2007. The second, entitled "Study for the management of oily wastes generated by the cleaning operations of the Lebanese coast following the oil spill of el Jiyeh", which was published in

[5] On 1 November 2007, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government of Norway and the Government of Lebanon, under which clean-up operations took place in six areas in north and south Beirut under the technical supervision of the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon (December 2007-February 2008).

[6] On 3 August 2007, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government of the United States of America, represented by the United States Agency for International Development, and the Government of Lebanon, under which clean-up operations took place in 21 areas between Tabarja and Anfeh under the technical supervision of the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon (September 2007-May 2008).

[7] On 18 October 2007, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Government of Spain, through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development, and the Government of Lebanon, under which clean-up operations took place on Palm Islands Nature Reserve (May 2008-June 2009).

December 2007, was funded by the Ministry of Finance and Industry of France and implemented in coordination with the Council for Development and Reconstruction in Lebanon, and a French independent engineering and environmental consulting firm as well as the Centre de Documentation de Recherche et d'Experimentations sur les pollutions accidentelles des eaux. Both studies highlight the fact that Lebanon currently lacks the infrastructure for the environmentally sound treatment of such waste. Based on these findings, the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon designed a brief project proposal on sound environmental waste management, including a waste schematic diagram.

23. With funding from the Canadian International Development Agency and the Government of Japan through UNDP and in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision, oil-spill clean-up wastes which were still on shore in el Jiyeh area and surrounding areas (about 645 cubic metres) were transported to safe temporary storage sites (el Jiyeh power plant for solid wastes and Zouk power plant for liquid wastes) in the last quarter of 2008. Coupled with complementary initiatives by the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and the United States Agency for International Development, an intervention allowed the removal of all oil-spill-recovered wastes from the entire shoreline north of Beirut.

24. In parallel, with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency through UNDP, in coordination with the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and under its technical supervision, as well as in conjunction with other public and private partners, treatment was initiated at two of the temporary storage sites, and is expected to be completed in the third quarter of 2009:

(a) Zahrani refinery (about 310 cubic metres of polluted sand and pebbles, debris and equipment), where treatment started in January 2009 with the polluted sand and pebbles;

(b) A plot of land close to the coastline of Beirut Central District made available by a private Lebanese company, where about 2,000 cubic metres of polluted sand will be stabilized using quicklime; this is still at the research/testing phase.

25. Together these two activities will set a model for treatment by the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon and its partners, for the remaining wastes (about 2,500 cubic metres) stored at the refinery in Tripoli and the el Jiyeh and Zouk power plants (liquid and residues).

26. Limited funding has been provided so far; co-funding is still needed to achieve the objectives entailed. The Government of Norway, through its embassy in Lebanon, in its letter dated 24 September 2008 informed the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon that the oil spill waste management project would be financed from the budget for the year 2009 of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon has submitted a full project application and is working closely with the Government of Norway to put the project into effect.

C. Environmental monitoring

27. In the light of the international meeting convened in Athens on 17 August 2006 by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and UNEP, hosted by the Government of Greece, which reached agreement on the Action Plan prepared by the Experts Working Group for Lebanon under the supervision of the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Centre and the Minister for the Environment of Lebanon, and given the fact that the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 61/194, encouraged Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to provide financial and technical assistance to the Government of Lebanon in support of its efforts to clean up the polluted shores and sea of Lebanon with a view to preserving its ecosystem, the Government of Greece allocated $1.6 million for the implementation of an environmental monitoring project in Lebanon.

D. Overall cost and assistance

28. Assistance for phase I is estimated at almost $15 million (mostly in the form of equipment and technical assistance (see annex 2)). This is according to table 2.24 of the World Bank report published in 2007;[8] however, this assistance is currently overestimated at around $18.5 million.

29. The aforementioned equipment was deposited by the Ministry of the Environment of Lebanon with the relevant public administrations responsible for responding to a national emergency, such as the oil spill, through tripartite decision 61/1 dated 29/10/2008 signed between the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities. The objective of this decision is to put that equipment to good effect and to leverage its value.

30. It should be noted that the Ministry of the Environment estimated the cost of the clean-up at $150 million, based on an applied model of costs per ton spilled, while the Experts Working Group for Lebanon estimated the overall cost of clean-up and rehabilitation at between $137 million and $205 million. The Experts Working Group for Lebanon recommended that range as an upper limit, with $68 million[9] as the minimum value. The Working Group therefore proposed that the search for funding be based on an initial amount of $68 million for 2006, with possible complements for 2007.[10] The total assistance received by Lebanon as of June 2008 was therefore around 10 per cent of the average upper limit range, and only about

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[8] World Bank, *Republic of Lebanon: Economic assessment of environmental degradation due to July 2006 hostilities*, report No. 39787-LB (Washington, D.C., 2007).

[9] Converted from euros, the currency used by the Experts Working Group for Lebanon, at a rate of 1 euro = $1.36 (the United Nations rate on 21 May 2009).

[10] Experts Working Group for Lebanon, Lebanon Marine and Coastal Oil Pollution International Assistance Action Plan, 25 August 2006. Members of the Experts Working Group for Lebanon include the Joint Environment Unit of UNEP and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the European Commission Monitoring and Information Centre, the International Tanker Owners Pollution Federation Ltd., UNDP, Instituto Centrale per la Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica Applicata al Mare, the Oceanography Centre, University of Cyprus, and Centre de Documentation de Recherche et d'Experimentations sur les pollutions accidentelles des eaux.

37 per cent of the minimum value. Furthermore, the lower estimate of $68 million arrived at by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea was based substantially on the cost of just one major Mediterranean spill (Haven, 1991), which had similarities with, but also some significant differences from, the spill in Lebanon.

V. Progress made in the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund, based on voluntary contributions and mobilization of sufficient and adequate resources

31. In paragraph 6 of its resolution 63/211, the General Assembly decides to establish an Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund, based on voluntary contributions, to provide assistance and support to the States directly adversely affected in their integrated environmentally sound management, from clean-up to safe disposal of oily waste, of this environmental disaster resulting from the destruction of the oil storage tanks at el Jiyeh electric power plant, and requests the Secretary-General to implement this decision before the end of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly.

32. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 63/211, the General Assembly invites States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to make voluntary financial contributions to the Trust Fund, and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to mobilize international technical and financial assistance in order to ensure that the Trust Fund has sufficient and adequate resources.

33. UNEP is taking steps to facilitate the establishment of the Trust Fund and will report on progress in due course.

34. Furthermore, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has expressed its readiness to host the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund, by stating that in principle, ESCWA is in the position to manage a trust fund and the basic United Nations rules for the establishment and management of trust funds apply also in the case of ESCWA. Additionally the standard office procedures are in place for the receipt and recording of voluntary contributions for ESCWA trust funds.

VI. Conclusions

35. The Secretary-General wishes to commend the ongoing efforts made by the Government of Lebanon to address the impact of the oil spill and to urge the Government of Israel to take the necessary actions towards assuming responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon. The Secretary-General would also like to commend the efforts made by the United Nations system in responding to the emergency and thereafter to the requests of the Government of Lebanon pertaining to the management of the oil spill crisis. While the response of the international donor community has been both generous and timely given the particularities of the cause and the circumstances prevailing at the time of the oil spill incident and after, the Secretary-General would urge Member

States, international organizations, international and regional financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to continue their support for Lebanon in this matter, particularly for rehabilitation activities on the Lebanese coast, as well as in the broader recovery effort. The international effort should be intensified, since Lebanon is still engaged in oil removal, waste treatment and recovery monitoring. It should also be recognized that the oil spill is not covered by any of the international oil-spill compensation funds, and thus merits special consideration. Towards this end, the Secretary-General is currently finalizing the mechanism under which the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Fund will operate.

Annex I

Letter dated 10 December 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Israel addressed to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme

Dear Mr. Steiner,

First, allow me to apologize for the delay of our response to your letter, dated 5 June 2008. I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate our position:

Israel is committed to protecting the environment both nationally and regionally and shares UNEP's concern for the environment. May we also stress that Israel is an active participant in the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea and is working together with all parties to the convention to promote its aims.

As you are well aware, the 2006 conflict, which erupted between Israel and Lebanon, had severe implications on the people of this region as well as the environment on both sides of the border. Please bear in mind that it was not Israel which initiated the violence, but rather reacted to an aggressive unprovoked action against it, and thus the conflict came to be.

During the confrontations, following the oil spill, Israel responded to requests by REMPEC for assistance and issue permissions for the aerial photographic flights requested by international agencies.

Following the conflict, the Post-Conflict Assessment Branch of UNEP conducted a report on the state of the environment in Lebanon. In the report, there is a long list of findings and recommendations following the work of the team, whose professionalism we highly respect. Its findings include, for example, the following (p. 166-167):

- "The concentrations of PAH in seabed sediment and in molluscs beyond the immediate vicinity of the power plant were similar to what is expected in coastal areas under the influence of urban zones, industry and transport, with the spill adding marginally to these background concentrations."
- "The levels of petroleum hydrocarbons in the tissue of oysters beyond the immediate vicinity of the power plant were in the expected range of concentrations for areas under anthropogenic influence."
- "The concentrations of petroleum hydrocarbons in the samples of fish tissue were found to be below or slightly above the detection limit. No difference was detected between the petroleum hydrocarbons concentrations in fish from different areas or in species from different tropic levels."

In our view, facts presented by the Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment Branch itself illustrate a situation, which is substantially different from that implied by the decisions of the General Assembly regarding the Oil Slick on Lebanese Shores (A/RES/61/194 and A/RES/62/188).

The General Assembly decisions stipulates as follows: "The oil slick has heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and has consequently serious implications for human health biodiversity and fisheries and tourism ..." and "oil slick has

heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and partially polluted Syrian shores and consequently has had serious implications for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health, in the country."

The assessment clearly states that although there was environmental damage that occurred due to the fighting in the area, it was limited in scope and had relatively limited long-term effects.

We have full confidence in the professionalism of UNEP's staff and that it will continue as in the past, to promote attention to environmental issues. We regard UNEP's forward looking reports as a basis for continued cooperation between Israel and the organization.

(*Signed*) Jacob **Keidar**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex 2

Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations and private sector entities that had provided financial and technical assistance to the Government of Lebanon as at 24 June 2008

	Cash contributions	*Technical assistance*[a]	*Equipment*[b]	*Contractors*[c]
Member States				
First response during the war				
Kuwait		■	■	
European Union/Danish Emergency Management Agency		■		
Norway		■	■	
Post-war assistance				
Norway	▨	■	■	
Canada (Canadian International Development Agency)				■▨
Cyprus			■	
Finland			■	
France		■	■	
Germany		■		
Italy		■	■	
Monaco			■	
Spain[d]		■	■	▨
Sweden		■		
Switzerland (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation)				■
Japan				■
United States (United States Agency for International Development)				■▨

	Cash contributions	*Technical assistance*[a]	*Equipment*[b]	*Contractors*[c]
Regional organizations				
League of Arab States/Egypt		■		
International organizations				
United Nations Development Programme	■			
World Bank		■		
United Nations Environment Programme, Post-Conflict Branch, and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs		■		
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations		■		
Regional financial institutions				
Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (Fund for International Development)	■			
International financial institutions				
None				
International non-governmental organizations				
International Union for Conservation of Nature — West Africa, Central Asia and North Africa office and Mediterranean offices		■		
Greenpeace		■		
International private sector				
Recoverit International, Australia				▨

[a] Transfer of technical know-how by experienced personnel for activities related to oil-spill recognition, evaluation and control activities.

[b] Hardware and software (consumables) for the purpose of oil-spill recognition, evaluation and control activities.

[c] Contractors are third parties contracted to undertake oil-spill recognition, evaluation and control activities and are directly subcontracted by development partners.

[d] Phase II work funded by the Government of Spain was carried out through the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development.

■ Phase I development partner.

▨ Phase II development partner.